

## Message Text

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USIE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03  
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O 211802Z JAN 77  
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9009  
INFO AMCONSUL BORDEAUX  
AMCONSUL LYON  
AMCONSUL MARSEILLE  
AMCONSUL MARTINIQUE  
AMCONSUL NICE  
AMCONSUL STRASBOURG

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 PARIS 02102

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PINT, FR  
SUBJECT: MICHEL D'ORNANO RECONFIRMS HIS CANDIDACY FOR  
THE POST OF MAYOR OF PARIS

REF: PARIS 002007

SUMMARY. MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR MICHEL D'ORNANO  
PUBLICLY RECONFIRMED HIS CANDIDACY FOR MAYOR OF PARIS  
ON JANUARY 20. MEANWHILE JACQUES CHIRAC'S CANDIDACY  
HAS PROVOKED WIDELY DIVERSE REACTIONS. AS THINGS NOW  
STAND, THERE IS A LIKELIHOOD THAT CHIRAC WILL BE ELEC-  
TED MUNICIPAL COUNCILLOR AND EVEN SUCCEED IN HIS MOVE  
TO BE MAYOR, THUS OPENING THE DOOR FOR A SERIES OF  
ADVANCES THAT COULD LEAD HIM EVER CLOSER TO THE ELYSEE.  
MEANWHILE THERE ARE FRESH RUMORS, WHICH EMBASSY DIS-  
COUNTS, OF ADVANCED LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS. END SUMMARY.

1. REACTIONS: WHILE THERE WAS SOME SPECULATION AFTER  
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CHIRAC'S INITIAL ANNOUNCEMENT THAT D'ORNANO WOULD WITH-  
DRAW FROM THE RACE FOR TOWN HALL, D'ORNANO HIMSELF RE-  
CONFIRMED HIS CANDIDACY IN A PRESS CONFERENCE ON THE  
AFTERNOON OF JANUARY 20. HIS REASONS FOR SO DOING IN  
A SITUATION THAT NOW PUTS HIM BASICALLY IN THE LOSING  
POSITION ARE OPEN TO QUESTION, BUT WE CAN ASSUME THAT,  
SINCE HE SAW BOTH PRESIDENT GISCARD D'ESTAING AND PRIME

MINISTER BARRE BEFORE MAKING HIS ANNOUNCEMENT, HE WAS INFLUENCED BY THEIR RECOMMENDATIONS. BARRE HIMSELF, IN A SEPARATE PRESS CONFERENCE, DECLARED THAT HE HAD EXPRESSED TO CHIRAC HIS CONCERN OVER THE FACT THAT CHIRAC'S ACT MIGHT PROVOKE "A SERIOUS DIVISION WITHIN THE MAJORITY" AND COULD "LEAD TO CONSEQUENCES CONTRARY TO THOSE THAT MR. CHIRAC BELIEVES WILL FOLLOW." STATE SECRETARY FOR OVERSEAS DEPARTMENTS, OLIVIER STIRN, HAS RESIGNED FROM THE RPR IN PROTEST. AS STIRN IS NOT HELD IN HIGH ESTEEM BY THE MOVEMENT AND BY MANY OF HIS COLLEAGUES IN GOVERNMENT, THE RPR IS RATIONALIZING THIS MINOR DEFECTION AS RIDDING ITSELF OF A LUKEWARM SUPPORTER. JEAN LECANUET, MINISTER OF STATE FOR PLANNING AND PRESIDENT OF THE CENTRE DES DEMOCRATES SOCIAUX (CLOSE TO THE INDEPENDENT REPUBLICANS AND, THOUGH ONE OF THE MAJORITY COALITION, BASICALLY OPPOSED TO THE RPR), DECLARED THAT CHIRAC'S MOVE HAS OPENED THE WAY TO A LEFT VICTORY IN PARIS AND IS AN ATTACK ON FRENCH INSTITUTIONS. ROGER CHINAUD, PRESIDENT OF THE RI GROUP IN THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY, HAS LAMBASTED CHIRAC FOR EGO-MANIA AND OVERWEANING AMBITION. FINALLY, CHIRAC HIMSELF HELD A PRESS CONFERENCE LATE ON JANUARY 20 (ONCE AGAIN HE HAS BEEN DEPRIVED OF PRESS COVERAGE BY A NEWSPAPER STRIKE -- PARIS 35997) IN WHICH HE DECLARED HIS AIM NOT TO DIVIDE THE MAJORITY, BUT TO FIGHT SOCIO-COMMUNIST COLLECTIVISM. HE FURTHER DECLARED HIS ACTION WAS NOT DIRECTED AGAINST GOF AND THAT HE AND HIS PARTY FULLY SUPPORTED GOVERNMENT ACTION ON THE ECONOMIC FRONT. HE DOES NOT YET KNOW IN WHAT SECTOR HE WILL RUN. THROUGH IT ALL THE PRESIDENT, CONFIDENTIAL

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HAVING PLACED HIMSELF ABOVE THE PARTIES, IS MAINTAINING A SILENCE THAT SHRIEKS.

2. A NUMBER OF SCENARIOS ARE CONCEIVABLE IN LIGHT OF CHIRAC'S DRAMATIC GESTURE.

A) CHIRAC AND D'ORNANO RUN, D'ORNANO LOSES: THIS WOULD BE A SEVERE BLOW TO THE PRESTIGE OF BOTH THE PRESIDENT AND D'ORNANO AND WOULD PUT CHIRAC DIRECTLY IN A LINE OF ACTION THAT COULD TAKE HIM FROM ONE POLITICAL COUP TO ANOTHER RIGHT UP TO THE NEXT PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION. IN FACT THE PRESIDENT'S MAIN MISTAKE WAS IN NOT ALLOWING IR SECRETARY GENERAL DOMINATI AND DE LA MALENE (RPR) TO SLUG IT OUT, THEREBY KEEPING THE BATTLE AT A POLITICAL LEVEL FAR REMOVED FROM THE UPPER REACHES OF THE ELYSEE. WE HAVE HEARD, HOWEVER, THAT THE PRESIDENT, DESPITE ALL APPEARANCES, WAS ADVERSE TO DOMI-

NATT'S CANDIDACY BECAUSE HE FEARED TOO STRONG

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AND TOO INDEPENDENT A PERSONALITY IN THE TOWN  
HALL.

B) BOTH CHIRAC AND D'ORNANO WITHDRAW: THIS WOULD  
BE THE MOST FACE-SAVING MOVE ALL AROUND FOR  
THE ELYSEE AND D'ORNANO. IN SUCH A SITUATION,  
CHIRAC COULD STILL KEEP THE INITIATIVE BY  
ANNOUNCING THAT HE WOULD WITHDRAW HIS OWN  
CANDIDACY (HE DENIED SUCH A POSSIBILITY IN HIS  
PRESS CONFERENCE) IF D'ORNANO WOULD DO THE  
SAME, THEREBY OPENING THE DOOR TO A THIRD CAN-  
DIDATE SUCH AS ROGER FREY, PRESIDENT OF THE  
CONSTITUTIONAL COUNCIL. IN THIS CASE D'ORNANO,  
WHO IS CURRENTLY RUNNING HIS WIFE IN DEAUVILLE  
TO TAKE HIS PLACE, COULD RETURN TO DEAUVILLE NOT  
TOO SHEEPISHLY AND BE CERTAINLY REELECTED MAYOR.

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C) D'ORNANO UNILATERALLY WITHDRAWS: IT IS A TOSS UP WHETHER SCENARIO "A" OR THIS ONE WOULD BE WORSE FOR THE PRESIDENT AND D'ORNANO. SHOULD, HOWEVER, D'ORNANO REALIZE AS ELECTION TIME APPROACHED THAT HE WAS GOING TO LOSE BOTH DEAUVILLE AND PARIS, HE MIGHT ASK HIS WIFE TO STEP DOWN AND REPRESENT HIMSELF IN DEAUVILLE, GIVING THE IMPRESSION THAT NO ONE WAS CAPABLE OF STAND IN CHIRAC'S WAY.

D) VGE OUT-CHIRACS CHIRAC: CONSIDERING THE BLOW TO HIS PRESTIGE AND TO THAT OF THE PRESIDENCY UNACCEPTABLE, THE PRESIDENT COULD MAKE THE DRAMATIC MOVE OF DISSOLVING THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY. THOUGH OUT OF KEEPING WITH HIS CHARACTER, THIS WOULD HAVE THE PROBABLE EFFECT OF STRONGLY REDUCING RPR STRENGTH IN THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY AND CONSEQUENTLY THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY. SUCH A MOVE ON THE PRESIDENT'S PART, HOWEVER, IS UNLIKELY, AND IN FACT HE REINDORSED THE 1978 DATE IN HIS JANUARY 17 PRESS CONFERENCE (PARIS 01697).

3. CHIRAC'S FUTURE: AT THIS POINT A SECTOR BY SECTOR BREAKDOWN IN PARIS SHOWS JACQUES CHIRAC THE CLEAR WINNER OVER D'ORNANO. CHIRAC IS NOT WITHOUT ENEMIES AT THE HOTEL DE VILLE HOWEVER, AND WHILE SUCH AN EVENT IS FARTHEFETCHED, IT IS NONETHELESS POSSIBLE TO IMAGINE A COALITION OF INDEPENDENT REPUBLICAN, CENTRIST AND CERTAIN OPPOSITION COUNSELORS VOTING FOR AN IR OR CENTRIST CANDIDATE TO BE MAYOR IN A COLLECTIVE EFFORT TO BLOCK CHIRAC. THIS WOULD BE A SERIOUS SETBACK TO CHIRAC. ON THE OTHER HAND, THERE COULD ALSO BE A BLOCKED VOTE WITH NO SINGLE CANDIDATE ABLE TO OBTAIN A SIMPLE MAJORITY (OF THE 109 VOTES) NECESSARY TO HAVE HIM ELECTED MAYOR. WHETHER OR NOT CHIRAC IS ELECTED MAYOR, IT IS POSSIBLE

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THAT HE RUN FROM A PARIS CIRCUMSCRIPTION IN THE 1978 LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS. HE WOULD WIN AND THEREBY BE ONE AND THE SAME TIME PARIS MUNICIPAL COUNCILLOR (IF NOT MAYOR), PARIS DEPUTY AND PRESIDENT OF THE PARIS-BASED RPR. KNOWING CHIRAC'S AMBITIONS AND POLITICAL ACUMEN, IT IS DIFFICULT TO SEE WHAT COULD STOP HIM EVENTUALLY MAKING A TRY FOR THE ELYSEE.

4. ALL THE BOYS MAKE GOOD: RPR PARIS MUNICIPAL COUNSE-  
LORS WHOSE SECTORS WERE THREATENED EITHER BY THE LEFT OR  
BY AN IR ADVERSARY WILL ALL RECEIVE A TREMENDOUS SHOT IN  
THE ARM BECAUSE OF CHIRAC'S MOVE. HE WILL CONDUCT THE  
KIND OF DOOR-TO-DOOR CAMPAIGN THAT HE RECENTLY DID IN  
THE CORREZE (PARIS 33813) AND WHEREVER IT LOOKS AS IF  
ONE OF HIS BOYS IS IN TROUBLE, HE WILL BRING ESPECIALLY  
ARDENT SUPPORT. THE OPPOSITION, IF IT ENTERTAINED ANY  
SERIOUS HOPES AT ALL OF TAKING PARIS--WHICH IS DOUBTFUL  
--HAS JUST SEEN ITS HOPES DIMINISH FURTHER. THE CEN-  
TRISTS AND THE IR'S MAY GNASH THEIR TEETH, BUT JACQUES  
CHIRAC IS CALLING THE GAME AND IT LOOKS AT THIS EARLY  
POINT IN THE CAMPAIGN AS IF NO ONE CAN STOP HIM.

5. CONCLUSIONS: IN SUMMATION, HERE ARE THE EMBASSY'S  
CONCLUSIONS ABOUT CHIRAC'S INITIATIVE IN THE PARIS  
MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS.

A) THERE WAS LITTLE DANGER OF THE LEFT WINNING A  
MAJORITY IN PARIS. CHIRAC'S EXPLANATION OF HIS

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O 211802Z JAN 77  
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CANDIDACY IS THEREFORE DISINGENUOUS.

B) OUR EXPLANATION IS AS FOLLOWS. LIKE THE REST OF FRANCE' PARIS WILL REGISTER AN INCREASE OF LEFT VOTING IN THE NEXT ELECTION. ALSO LIKE THE REST OF FRANCE, THIS INCREASE OF LEFT VOTES WILL COME MAINLY AT THE EXPENSE OF THE GAULLISTS. THIS HAS BEEN EVIDENT IN PARIS WHERE A NUMBER OF GAULLIST MUNICIPAL COUNCILLORS WHO REPRESENT WORKING CLASS DISTRICTS CONCEDE THAT THEY ARE IN TROUBLE. CHIRAC'S ENTRY INTO THE MUNICIPAL RACE IS DESIGNED TO TURN THIS TREND AROUND AND SAVE THE GAULLISTS THEY ARE PRESENTLY THE LARGEST SINGLE GROUP IN THE COUNCIL. WITHOUT CHIRAC'S DYNAMIC ACTION, THE GAULLISTS RISKED FALLING BEHIND THE COMBINED TOTAL OF NON-GAULLISTS IN THE MAJORITY.

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CHIRAC MAY NOW BE ABLE TO MAKE THE DIFFERENCE FOR THE GAULLISTS. IN ANY EVENT, THERE IS NOBODY ELSE OF STATURE IN THE GAULLIST CAMP WHO COULD HAVE MADE THE EFFORT INSTEAD OF CHIRAC.

C) THE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL OF 109 MEMBERS WILL ELECT THE MAYOR. ALL OF THE NON-GAULLISTS, LEFT OR RIGHT, WILL HAVE AN INTEREST IN KEEPING CHIRAC FROM BEING MAYOR. THE POSSIBILITY OF CHIRAC BEING MAYOR OF PARIS IS THEREFORE NOT ASSURED. BUT THE FIRST STEP IS TO KEEP THE GAULLISTS FROM BEING DEALT A MORTAL BLOW AS DESCRIBED ABOVE. IF THE GAULLISTS CAN KEEP THEIR SUPREMACY, THEY WILL BE IN BETTER SHAPE FOR THE LEGISLATIVES. OTHERWISE, CHIRAC FEELS THEY CAN BE DEALT A DEATH BLOW FOR THE LEGISLATIVES BY A POOR SHOWING IN THE MUNICIPALS.

D) WE DO NOT BELIEVE THAT GISCARD WILL CHANGE HIS MIND ABOUT THE TIMING OF LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS. THIS IS RELATED TO THE BARRE PLAN WHICH CALLS FOR AUSTERITY UNTIL LATE 1977 AND REFLATION IN EARLY 1978 WHICH WOULD SET THE STAGE FOR AN ELECTION. THE CHIRAC MOVE DOES NOT RELATE TO THIS SCENARIO. TO CALL AN ELECTION IN 1977 IN MIDST OF A FIGHT WITH CHIRAC WOULD ONLY ASSURE A LEFT VICTORY. THE BASIC STRATEGY THAT GISCARD AND CHIRAC MUST NOT GET INTO A PUBLIC FIGHT STILL HOLDS, AND WE DO NOT THINK THAT GISCARD WILL BE

PANICKED BY THIS LATEST DEVELOPMENT.

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